

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8096

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 5284

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJECT: COMMUNISTS WILL HOLD PARTY CONGRESS IN NOVEMBER

1. THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY HAS ANNOUNCED THAT IT WILL HOLD ITS EIGHTH NATIONAL CONGRESS FROM NOVEMBER 12 TO 15, PRESUMABLY IN LISBON. IT WILL BE THE FIRST REGULAR CONGRESS HELD BY THE PCP SINCE ITS LEGALIZATION FOLLOWING THE APRIL 1974.

2. COMMENT: THE CONGRESS, WHICH HAS SEVERAL TIMES BEEN POSTPONED, REMAINS THE FOCAL POINT OF SPECULATION REGARDING POSSIBLE CHANGES IN THE PCP LEADERSHIP AND ORIENTATION. RUMORS ABOUT BOTH ABOUND. BUT THERE IS NO CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE INDICATING CHANGES ARE IN STORE, AND, AS USUAL, THE PCP IS PLAYING IT STRAIGHT. ASPECTS OF THE
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CONGRESS WHICH WILL BEAR CLOSE WATCHING INCLUDE:

-- FOREIGN INVITEES: WILL USSR AND EAST GERMAN GUESTS
HOLD CENTER STAGE OR WILL THEY SHARE IT WITH "EURO-
COMMUNIST" DELEGATIONS, E.G., FROM ITALY AND SPAIN?
-- LEADERSHIP SHIFTS: WHO WILL BE ADDED AND WHO WILL
BE DROPPED FROM THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE?
-- CUNHAL: WILL CUNHAL REMAIN THE DOMINANT FORCE, AS
MOST EXPECT, OR WILL HE BE PUSHED UPSTAIRS TO THE PARTY
PRESIDENCY?

3. THE PCP POSTURE AT THE CONGRESS WILL BE INFLUENCED
BY EVENTS PRECEDING IT. IF THE SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT
APPEARS TO BE MOUNTING A SUCCESSFUL EFFORT TO PROMOTE
ECONOMIC RECOVERY, THE COMMUNISTS WOULD BE MORE INCLINED
TOWARD A "MODERATE LINE." MANIFEST GOVERNMENT FAILURES,
ON THE OTHER HAND, WOULD PROBABLY ENCOURAGE THE PCP IN ITS
CURRENT DOCTRINAIRE MOSCOW LINE. CLEARLY THE PCP
POLICY IN THE INTERIM WILL PLAY A ROLE IN DETERMINING
THE DEGREE OF SUCCESS OF THE SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT. THE
COMMUNISTS WILL ALSO BE LOOKING AHEAD TO DECEMBER LOCAL
ELECTIONS. THE RESULTS OF THE CONGRESS WILL BE A TIP
OFF TO THE PCP ELECTION STRATEGY.
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